

Arun District Council

FAO: Hebe Smith

By email only

14th August 2026

**Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England)
Order 2015**

Application Reference: LU/157/26/PL

Site: WICK FOOTBALL CLUB, CRABTREE PARK COOMES WAY BN17 7LP

Proposal: Change of surface from grass to artificial turf and erection of new 2.5m acoustic fencing. Is in CIL Zone 2 (zero rated) as all other development.

Sport England Reference: PA/26/SE/AR/74592

Dear Hebe,

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

Sport England – statutory consultee role and policy

We understand that you have consulted us as a statutory consultee in line with the above Order. Therefore, we have considered the application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in particular paragraph 104, and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, which is presented within our 'Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document': www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy

Sport England's policy is to oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or prejudice the use of:

- all or any part of a playing field, or
- land which has been used as a playing field land remains undeveloped, or
- land allocated for use as a playing field

unless, in the judgement of Sport England the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions. The exceptions are provided in the Annex to this response.

The proposal and impact on playing field

The proposal is to convert the existing natural turf football pitch to a 3G artificial pitch at Wick Football Club. It is unclear from the application what sports the new artificial pitch will accommodate.

National Governing Body comments

Sport England have consulted with the relevant National Governing Bodies for Sport (NGB's) to receive technical design advice on this application. The relevant NGB's are the FF. Their response is summarised below:

FF and FA

The FF and FA are supportive of this project in principle, however there is a lack of detail that we would like to see addressed. We are also unclear on the padel that is shown in the proposed site layout, with no reference to this in the design and access statement. The padel courts would restrict car parking on site, which would be highly concerning. The below lists our concerns from a technical preceptive that should be addressed prior to construction.

Technical detail

- *The document listed- Edge Detail Plan Dwg no. 2230/04- references that the 3G will be sand-dressed. This contradicts other documents.*
- *The document listed- Proposed Site Layout Dwg no. 0001- show padel courts in the car park, with no reference to this in the D&A statement or other documents. We are concerned that this will restrict the limited car parking on site. We do not support these plan with the current level of information provided.*
- *A lack of detail provided on Infill retention measures.*
- *Occupants of the dugouts will have a restricted view of the pitch due to the deep recess, pitch perimeter barrier, and standing spectators which would need to be excluded by the application of yellow hatching to the hardstanding.*
- *As it's a stadia pitch, the 11v11 goals should be socketed.*
- *They should ensure that there is a minimum 0.9m walkway between the existing stands and the pitch perimeter barrier.*
- *If the levels of the pitch are changing, there should be no brick/block/concrete retaining walls within the pitch run-off.*
- *The club now plays at Step 5 and would need to ensure they are able to incorporate further improvements should they be promoted to Step 4.*
- *The FA's Stadium Accreditation Criteria states that clubs should 'aim' for a capacity of 1,300 at Step 4. To achieve this, the walkway around the pitch should ideally be at least 2.4m wide.*
- *The apparent lack of parking may be an issue with the intensification of use.*
- *No reference to pitch testing or FIFA Quality mark*

Local need

Wick FC has 4 teams currently and is linked through accreditation with Wick Dynamos FC, which has 20 teams including 3 pan disability teams. Both clubs are 2 accredited. The LFFP for Arun indicates that there is demand for a 3G ATP in the area.*

Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF

Sport England are unable to provide a comprehensive response to this application as there is some information in the application that is missing to understand what is being delivered and whether it is fit for purpose to meet the communities needs.

It notes in the Planning Statement that the council were concerned that parking may be an issue given the increase in use of the site due to the artificial pitch, however the proposed site layout drawing shows 3 padel courts located in the parking lot. Is padel being delivered as part of this application? This has not been stated in the Planning Statement and no design information has been provided.

It also states in the Planning Statement that "the current proposal would provide additional/improved facilities for the school assisting in providing a more consistent surface for football and rugby..." It doesn't appear to discuss any information about meeting surface requirements to accommodate both football and rugby in other parts of the application.

This application would be assessed against exception 5 of Sport England's policy as well as paragraph 104 of the NPPF, however we are unable to determine if the proposal for a 3G pitch would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport to outweigh the loss of the existing natural turf playing field. Further information is requested.

Sport England's position

Given the above, Sport England raises a **holding objection** to the application and request that the following information is provided:

- 1) Are padel courts being delivered and if so, please provide design details for these courts
- 2) What is the surface that is being delivered and what sports are being accommodated. If this is to be for rugby and football then the surface needs to be world rugby compliant as well as FIFA compliant.
- 3) All of the other questions raised from the Football Foundation under Technical Detail should also be addressed.

If you would like any further information or advice, please the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Cunningham MRTPI

Planner



Annex

The Five Exceptions to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy

Exception 1

A robust and up-to-date assessment has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of Sport England, that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.

Exception 2

The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.

Exception 3

The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:

- reduce the size of any playing pitch;
 - result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);
 - reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;
 - result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site;
- or
- prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.

Exception 4

The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field:

- of equivalent or better quality, and
- of equivalent or greater quantity, and
- in a suitable location, and
- subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.

Exception 5

The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.

The full 'Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document' is available to view at:

www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy

[REDACTED]

From: Elaine Walby on behalf of Planning.Responses
Sent: 19 August 2026 17:24
To: Planning Scanning
Subject: FW: LU/157/26/PL WICK FOOTBALL CLUB, CRABTREE PARK COOMES WAY BN17 7LP (SE ref: PA/26/SE/AR/74592)
Attachments: 2026.08.14 - Stat. Obj. - Wicks Football Club - SE Ref. 74592.pdf

[REDACTED]

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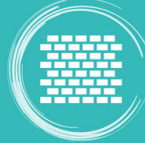
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From: Hebe Smith <Hebe.Smith@arun.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 August 2026 12:00
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: LU/157/26/PL WICK FOOTBALL CLUB, CRABTREE PARK COOMES WAY BN17 7LP (SE ref: PA/26/SE/AR/74592)

Hello,

Please can this be logged as the response from Sport England on LU/157/26/PL.

Thanks,

Hebe Smith (she/her)
Senior Planning Officer, Planning Department

T: 01903 737626
E: hebe.smith@arun.gov.uk

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Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF
www.arun.gov.uk

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From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Emma Cunnington
Sent: 14 August 2026 21:26
To: Hebe Smith <Hebe.Smith@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: LU/157/26/PL WICK FOOTBALL CLUB, CRABTREE PARK COOMES WAY BN17 7LP (SE ref: PA/26/SE/AR/74592)

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Dear Hebe,

Please find attached our response to the above application consultation.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Cunnington
Planning Manager

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